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# The Brooklyn Paper

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## Hostel takeover

City raids hotels, sends hipsters fleeing in Billyburg

By Aaron Short

The Brooklyn Paper

Talk about a hostel living environment!

City officials raided and cleared a six-story Williamsburg building that contained two allegedly illegal hostels and dozens of residential tenants on Friday afternoon after an inspector found that the commercial building was not zoned for residential use.

Twenty hostel guests, mostly in their 20s and early 30s, and other residents were told to gather their things and leave the building by this evening. The Red Cross arrived at the scene shortly after 2 pm to provide emergency services including temporary housing for those with nowhere else to go.

"We were told we had a few hours



Adriana Lee, an employee at a hostel on N. Sixth Street in Williamsburg, with her possessions after the city vacated her building.

<http://www.BrooklynPaper.com>

For more on Williamsburg's hostels, visit

www.BrooklynPaper.com

to get out," said Adriana Lee, an employee at Lofstet, one of the two hostels in the building. "Some people have been living here a couple of years."

Two hostels, Lofstet and Zip12 Hostel, separately managed 12 apartments total, which could house up to 16 people each with a capacity of 192 people. Tenants, many of them international students and interns at local hospitals and the United Nations, paid upwards of \$1,400 per month to live in the communal setting.

According to city officials, in addition to not having the proper permits, the building did not have a fire escape, sprinkler system or a secondary exit in case of emergency fires.

The owner of the building, Soonbin Kim, did not return calls for comment.

While the residents of Lofstet were evicted, guests at Zip12 were allowed to return to their rooms.

According to Zip12 President Young Yang, the city inspector was prepared to close the business, but after checking out the unit and noticing the second exit, the inspector permitted the company and its 10 tenants to stay.

Yang insisted that Zip12 is a legally registered company and said that the building's owner has been working

See **HOSTEL** on page 9



Mallory Hagan won the Miss Brooklyn pageant on Sunday.

## Here she is!

Miss Brooklyn has broad appeal

By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

There's no denying that the smartest, most talented and most beautiful women in the state are Brooklynites — and this year, Mallory Hagan is the queen of the crown.

The 21-year-old Alabama native is the newest Miss Brooklyn after top dancing and two-piece bikini-ing her way into the judges' hearts at the March 28 competition.

She defeated nine contestants, running on a "platform" of self-identity and positive body image.

Hagan, after all, wants to work with the Dove Campaign for Real Beauty, a self-esteem-promoting operation.

"As Miss Brooklyn, I want to leave a legacy for this organization rather than myself," Hagan said. "If I can convince one girl to be confident enough to be interested in competing ... my legacy will be my investment."

The Bedford-Stuyvesant renter has some big shoes to fill, as her predecessor Keele Sheridan of Sheepshead Bay readies herself for the

See **MISS** on page 9

## In Memoriam

The Brooklyn Paper

John Boy Walton, a Prospect Park swan with gray plumage and a relentless appetite for breadcrumbs, is dead. She was a cynic.

The cause of death is believed to be murder, though some say that the swan's rapid decline from good health to bad last week was due to a contaminated ecosystem.

Whatever the cause, John Boy, who despite the name is actually a female, was one of seven beloved swans on the lake in the southern portion of Brooklyn's central park, having arrived there only on Jan. 10 with her airborne companion, Grandpa Walton.

Susan Yuen, who called Animal Care and Control to rescue the felled

See **OBIT** on page 9



Despite the efforts of Animal Control, John Boy Walton the swan is dead — but was it poison or murder?

By Stephen Brown

The Brooklyn Paper

John Boy Walton, one of the celebrity swans of Prospect Park, has died — setting off a furious battle over whether it was murder ... or something even worse.

Animal investigator says it was a classic case of swan-on-swan violence — but waterfowl lovers who visit the park's lake every day say that John Boy was poisoned by a toxic ecosystem, the result of two weeks of mysterious macabre happenings along the lakefront.

"This poor creature was poisoned; it was not beaten by another swan

See **SWAN** on page 9

## SWAN DOWN!

Bird is just latest casualty in Park horror



Ringling Brothers will be back in Coney this summer.

## Circus plans return to Coney

By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

Maybe Coney Island really will be the "greatest show on earth" this summer.

On the heels of the city's announcement that a major new amusement park would operate from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus is poised to unveil an entirely new (or, at least, newly named) show that will run from June through Labor Day.

"The show is called, 'Illusionism,' and it will be thrilling," said Dick Zigun, founder of Coney Island USA, which runs the sideshow and the Mermaid Parade.

"We're letting people know that Coney Island has in fact not shut down," he said.

Officials from Ringling Brothers, whose "Boom-A-Ring" big top was one

of the few bright spots in a dismal summer last year, wouldn't comment on the return until all the paperwork is completed. But the company's Web site describes the "Illusionism" show as a "fantasy-filled world ... with eye-popping illusions, mind-blowing transformations," and of course, acrobats, exotic animals and clowns galore.

The deal to bring back the circus almost didn't happen, according to Zigun. The circus wanted to rise on the same West 21st Street lot that it occupied

last year, but landowner Joe Sitt has filled the land with school buses. Thankfully, Zigun said, the city agreed to take the buses on a West 29th Street lot.

The show will join the all-new Luna Park — an amusement park run by Italian-based ride manufacturer Zamperla — as one of the main attractions at Coney Island this summer.

"With these two major entertainers, Coney Island will really be the greatest show on earth," Zigun said.

## Obamas nosh pizza in DUMBO

By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

First Lady Michelle Obama and the First Kids downed three pies at DUMBO's legendary Grimaldi's Pizzeria on March 24 — and said it was better than Chicago-style pizza!

Even the family's jaded waiter was impressed.

"It was great! It's an honor," said Rafal Harjda, who served the fitness-obsessed Obama daughters Malia and Sasha one pie with pepperoni and sausage, one classic Margherita, and one with mushrooms,

peppers and onions.

The family showed up at around 1 pm with a full complement of security that kept Old Fulton Street in a lockdown for two hours.

Customers who wanted to enter the restaurant were given "the wand" and paddled down, while other guards escorted M'Obama and the kids.

The waiter also reported (naturally) that the First Family was impressed by the quality of the Grimaldi's pies.

"They told me they really liked it," Harjda said.



First Lady Michelle Obama rocked our world by downing pizza at Grimaldi's on Old Fulton Street last Wednesday.

## BrooklynPaper.com — best in the state!

The Brooklyn Paper's award-winning Web site was showered with yet another honor last week, as the New York Press Association named it the "Best Newspaper Web Site" in the state.

The BrooklynPaper.com is an outstanding local media Web site, the judges of the statewide contest said.

"With great restaurant reviews, savvy recommendations on stuff to do and an ever-quirky police blotter, the site offers a steady stream of highly local, highly useful information."

The BrooklynPaper.com was second place for its editorials, with the judges praising them as "pithy, tightly written with strong opinions."

It's not the first time that The Brooklyn Paper's Webmaster Sylvan Migdal has earned national recognition. Last year, the Suburban Newspapers of America named us the "Best Local Community Web Site" in the nation.

And in 2008, the Independent Free Press of America did, too.

## What, McMahon worry?

Dem rookie ignores heat for 'no' vote on Obamacare



You gotta hand it to Rep. Mike McMahon — for a freshman, he's one of the smartest, savvyest pols around.

Take his "No" vote on the health care reform package last month. A "yes" vote would have been easy — earning McMahon the glowing support of local unions, progressives and even the Working Families Party, that paper altar to which most Democrats now routinely genuflect.

And it also would've earned him a big albatross.

The kind you wear around the neck.

In his first term in Congress, McMahon has been a reliable vote for the Democrats. Sure, as many colleagues pointed out a few weeks ago, a line-by-line view of McMahon's voting record shows that he leans towards the Republican side of the aisle (and sometimes falls over it) when it comes to the military, denying legal rights to terrorists or refusing to cap executive pay.

But when Nancy Pelosi needs something, McMahon usually doesn't need

his arm twisted.

But on health care, McMahon was simply not on board. For months, he's been telling The Brooklyn Paper that the House bill didn't cut costs enough and would endanger local hospitals, so his vote was no surprise.

Afterwards, the reaction was predictable: The Working Families Party and some of the big unions announced that they not only can't sup-

port McMahon anymore, but will actively seek out a liberal Democrat to challenge him.

Working Families Party spokesman Dan Levitan was positively apoplectic, saying that 6,500 of his party voters who pulled the lever for McMahon in 2008 won't do so again.

"I'm sure those voters are now thinking, 'We used to have a Republican,'" he said.

See **MCMAHON** on page 9



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# The gift of love

**Our columnist puts himself in a box**



I've cast myself in plenty of my own fantasies, but as of this week, I officially have a way to make those dreams a reality.

That's right — in the name of news and the legends who write before me, I took on what is possibly the greatest feat of journalism since the publication of the Pentagon Papers: I have allowed a Williamsburg sex shop to cast an exact replica of my penis.

You might remember our coverage of Shag, the new swank sex toy shop on Roebbing Street, and its special body casting and artwork. And when we wrote "body casting," we really meant "penis casting."

You might ask why anyone would want a perfect model of his manhood. For me, the yearning to have Shag make a dildo version of myself was strictly journalistic. Who better than this reporter, who puts himself out there every day, to inform the public about the process?

Shag owners Sam Bard and Ashley Montgomery-Pulido have other reasons for providing this vital service.

"If you have one made, you can say to someone, 'Go F— yourself' — but mean it in a good way," Bard said. The end product is no Steely Dan, but a malleable, silicone sex toy, replicating every intricacy of the male genitalia, stem to stern as it were.



**OH, YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE!** Our columnist gives the greatest gift of all: A lifesize cast of his penis.

Of course, I chose green.

My pride swelled even larger when I found that my penis was Shag's first specimen — and I didn't even have to buy anyone dinner.

I'll digress by answering the most-

obvious questions first: Yes, I had to shave. Yes, I had to be — and stay — erect during the molding process. Yes, the owners saw my penis (yes, they were impressed). Yes, the testicles are involved. And yes, I did

have the option of turning the new toy into a vibrator (but you know me, I'm old-school).

That said, my hard times with Bard and Montgomery-Pulido were comfortable and professional (alas, a bit too professional); they've seen it all before.

"Sex is a part of almost everybody's life, no matter who they are," Montgomery-Pulido said as she began whipping up the goo into which I would soon insert my member. "Part of our mission is to break down the barriers between sex and art, and allow people to check their inhibitions at the door."

After I spent a little time in a private room with a TV and some DVDs (you know, a few "Simpsons" reruns to get in the mood), the cast was ready and I was called into the basement. A hand-held tube was filled with the gooey alginate (warm apple pie indeed!) and I made my entry. The owners were gracious enough to hold the cast up for me while I furiously tried to stop thinking about spring training and keep focusing on all the hands, bodies and activity around me. The process was finally over once the messy mixture hardened on their hands.

Montgomery-Pulido and Bard spent the next two weeks drying and filling a series of molds that will soon become a shining reminder of my huge feat. Of course, we all know that a silicone toy will pale in comparison to the real deal (in my humble opinion), but it's nice to know that there's now more of me to go around.

Tune in next week for the climax of this story.

Shag 108 Roebbing St. at N. Sixth Street in Williamsburg, (347) 721-3302. Normal casts are \$375, and vibrators are \$390. Next event: "Unrevealed" photographs by Jess Levy opens on April 2 (free booze!), 6-9:30 pm. For info, visit [www.weloveshag.com](http://www.weloveshag.com).

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## Air apparent!

**National fake guitar championship to thrash away at Brooklyn Bowl**

By Andy Campbell

The Brooklyn Paper

Sure, it takes talent to wait on an axe in front of a blood-thirsty crowd — but it takes some serious finesse to put on a show with nothing but the music at your back and the wind between your fingertips.

Twenty rockin' New Yorkers will do just that on April 9, when the U.S. Air Guitar Championship regionalists hits Brooklyn Bowl in Williamsburg.

Naturally, we'll be rooting for the freak-nasty Brooklynites — the ones whose wriggling fingers, flickering tongues and wild hair that make Jimi Hendrix look like a lounge act.

"I live the rock-star lifestyle — I was made for this," said Sara Cross (a.k.a. Professor LongAir), a punk-rock Park Sloper who will shoot for the finals next week. "I'm not exactly a rocker in real life, but as Professor LongAir, I will be shredding."

Donning a plaid skirt, a black corset and some fierce eye makeup, Cross will face off against other air guitarists in a two-round judging event on stage.

Each performer gets to thrash for 60 seconds to his or her own song (Cross wouldn't divulge the juicy details, but it'll definitely be punk), and another minute with a surprise



Downtown metal-head Marquina Ilev (aka Mateeka Katskilla) is a front-runner at the U.S. Air Guitar Championship at Brooklyn Bowl on April 9.

song during the second round. Instrument-less Billy Idol's will be judged on technical merit, stage presence and "airness" — the (vague) extent to which the performance transcends imitation and becomes art.

"The obvious first choice for air guitarists is to re-enact the hard-rockin' hair bands from the 1980s," said Craig Billmeier, the 2008 World Air Guitar Champion and one of this year's judges. "But if you can step outside of that, your act turns into your own stardom. It's like porn — you know it when you see it."

Going finger-to-finger against Cross will be metal-head Marquina Ilev (a.k.a. Mateeka Katskilla) of Downtown, whose flowing, heavy-metal hair is her main competitive edge.

So root for whichever Brooklynite you want — lest the winner be "Shreddy Mercury" from Westchester.

U.S. Air Guitar Championship at Brooklyn Bowl [61 Wythe Ave. between V, 11th and N, 12th streets, (718) 963-3369], April 9 at 9 pm.

## IT'S TIME TO GET REAL ABOUT NEW YORK'S JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM



There's no sugarcoating the seriousness of the situation in New York's juvenile justice facilities.

For years, the Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) ignored the warnings and disregarded the need for reform.

Now there's an administration that thinks it can just wave a magic wand and make everything better. What's more, they've tried to create a fairy tale about youth in state care, the staff who work with them every day and the ability of current community programs to adequately meet needs and protect everyone involved including the public.

In reality, there are rarely any fairy tale endings.

People have already been injured and killed because of OCFS irresponsibility.

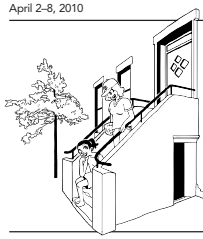
OCFS needs to slow their reckless drive to empty juvenile justice facilities and get real about ill-prepared community programs.

What's more, employees at Annsville, Tryon Boys and Lansing non-secure deserve better than what the OCFS administration is doing. OCFS needs to work with CSEA, PEF and others to create a better system of juvenile justice for all the people of New York. It takes serious, clear thinking and a lot of hard work, not some juvenile hocus-pocus.

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# THE STREETS

## NEIGHBORHOOD REPORT

### FORT GREENE

## Help cops find this rapist!

By Stephen Brown

The Brooklyn Paper

Cops are on the hunt for the armed rapist who assaulted a 42-year-old woman in Clinton Hill on March 23.

According to police, the victim was on Gates Avenue between Clason Avenue and Irving Place at around 5:30 a.m., when the hooded brute dragged her across the street and then raped and sodomized her in a vacant lot between two buildings.

Cops say the suspect matches the description of a thug who raped a 56-year-old woman on March 16 near Fulton Street and Franklin Avenue. In that incident, the creep forced the woman into a nearby park at gunpoint, where he then sexually assaulted her and struck her in the head with his gun.

The lowlife is thought to be in his late 20s or early 30s, roughly 5-foot-7 and 160 to 180 pounds, and was last seen wearing a black hat and a green jacket.

Anyone with information is asked to call (800) 577-8477.



### PARK SLOPE



Obama supporter Frances Lippette's car was defaced with epithets and anti-liberal screeds.

## Tea'd off note

### Liberal's car is defaced with anti-Obama sticker

By Claire Glass

for The Brooklyn Paper

"Obamacare" has claimed another unlikely victim: A liberal Park Slope woman's bumper-sticker-covered car!

Someone stuck a piece of cardboard to her car door — using tar as glue — cursing liberals and everything they stand for.

The victim of this hate-filled vulgarity, Frances Lippette, was enjoying a cup of coffee last Friday afternoon on Seventh Avenue, and found the distasteful defacement when she returned to her car parked on Berkeley Place.

The epithet filled tirade, which read, "F. Obama, Libber [sic] a-hole. F. that socialist," almost made Lippette spill her Fair Trade java.

"This is my beloved Park Slope," Lippette said. "I think of this area as being so liberal. We watched the whole neighborhood become what it is."

Lippette raised two children in Park Slope, and even worked on President Obama's campaign in North Carolina. The back of her car is covered with stickers showing her liberal-mindedness — something most of Park Slope can relate to, or so she thought.

This incident is minor compared to the death threats being left at — and in some cases hurled through the window of — congressional offices in the wake of last month's health care vote, but the hate behind it is the same.

"I'm 67 years old, so when I think of everything this country has been through I thought we were on an upswing, but if this could happen here, maybe not."

### BROOKLYN HEIGHTS

## It's the same old psalm

### Bikers faceoff with church-goers on Henry Street

By Gary Bulso

for The Brooklyn Paper

Cyclists are calling for a separation of church and bike lane along a narrow Brooklyn Heights roadway, where every Sunday, parishioners anoint the cyclists' safe haven as their own personal parking strip.

Along Henry Street between Clarke and Pierrepont streets, every Sabbath is the same old psalm outside the First Presbyterian Church, according to Heights resident Peter Kaufman, who said the situation is an unholy accident waiting to happen — and it's all allowed by the 84th Precinct.

"This basically says that if you have a particular religious belief, you get to flout the law," said Kaufman. "This is a place exclusively dedicated to bikers — we are not saying you can't park in Brooklyn Heights — we are saying park around the corner."

Rev. Stephen Phelps said



Cyclists complain that parishioners at Zion Lutheran Church on narrow Henry Street routinely park in the bike lane.

the parking provision has been made possible by the precinct — and it allows the very survival of the church, which was first formed in 1822.

"Churches would fail if they could not allow the driving public to come near," he said.

Phelps, who took over the reins of the church about four months ago, said he recently met with the commanding officer of the 84th Precinct, Capt. Mark DiPaolo about the matter.

"The police recognize that churches make extraordinary contributions to the commu-

nity," he said. "[DiPaolo] basically confirmed that this is a long standing practice. While we are really interested in the question of reducing the use of cars and supporting bikers — we see this as an acceptable cost, and they agree."

Pressed several times

### FORT GREENE



The sidewalk reconstruction along DeKalb Avenue near Fort Greene Park will remain a mess through the summer, the city now says.

### FORT GREENE

## The big dig

### DeKalb Avenue sidewalk near park is a real mess

By Stephen Witt

for The Brooklyn Paper

A road reconstruction project is causing treacherous conditions for pedestrians strolling on the Fort Greene Park side of DeKalb Avenue.

The shored-off way between S Oxford Street and S Elliot Place stems from the construction of a bus pull-in lane along DeKalb Avenue so that B38 can pick up passengers more safely.

Some say that the Department of Design and Construction did a good job on the new lane, but the agency left the sidewalk a mess.

"To have a place for the bus to pull in is good, but leaving the sidewalk a mess is not good and there are a lot

of hazards there," said Ruth Goldstein, the chairwoman of the Fort Greene Park Conservancy.

Design and Construction spokesman Craig Chin said that the sidewalk would be fixed by the end of the summer, when the weather allows work crews to do their job.

That's too long, Goldstein said.

"The hex blockstones have been a mess for years," said Goldstein. "They did work on DeKalb years ago and put them back and they didn't settle. When water and ice gets between them they heave up, and that area gets quite a bit of foot traffic, particularly on Saturday when there's the green market."

Alternatives. "And even at slow speeds, that's not where you want to be."

So what would the pastor do if the cyclists among his flock?

If you are reasonably confident, you can move in the traffic and you are going to be absolutely safe," he said. "Be bold, have fun, and cycle. And thank you for understanding why it is that churches need parking spaces on Sunday morning."

Kaufman refused to turn the other cheek.

"What part of 'bike lane' don't you understand?" he asked.

high visibility green paint was added to enhance the popular lane.

Cycling advocates co-located: Rabbi Serge Lippe, the rabbi at Brooklyn Heights Synagogue on nearby Remsen Street, agreed with Phelps.

"No one ever consulted with the church or parishioners that the bike lane coming in means they couldn't park there as they have been doing for decades," he said.

But cyclist Rob Hall, a Bedford-Stuyvesant resident and co-owner of a company that makes bicycle pedals, wasn't buying it.

"Why should they get special treatment putting cyclists at risk?" he asked. "Every time a cyclist has to go off a bicycle path in order to avoid a double-parked or illegally parked car, it puts both cyclists and motorists at risk."

The church first opened on Henry Street in 1847 — slightly before the Henry Street bike lane, which is one of the oldest in the city, according to the Department of Transportation, which dated it back to the 1970s.

In July, 2007, though,

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# Biker beats rap after crackdown

By Gary Buio  
for The Brooklyn Paper

Cyclist Nathan Brauer fought the law — and the law didn't apply.

Brauer, an architect from Fort Greene, was among those caught up in what some describe as a Downtown sting operation orchestrated by cops to ensure cyclists' ruling outside the Adams Street bike lane — even to avoid a double-parked car.

But the 42-year-old battled the ticket in traffic court and had the case dismissed — a small victory, he said, in an ongoing battle played out on the borough's mean streets.

The facts of the case are not in dispute.

It was a bitter cold morning on Feb. 2 when Brauer made his way to the Brooklyn Bridge.

"I was approaching Tillary Street and I was in the far left lane to enable access to the bridge most directly without interfering with other traffic," he said.

That's when Brauer — and at least 10 other cyclists —



Nathan Brauer poses at the entrance of the Brooklyn Bridge bike path, near where he received a ticket in what many cyclists believe is a crackdown on two-wheelers.

was detained by a police officer, and slapped with a ticket citing a state law that says that cyclists must remain in the bike lane.

Brauer conceded that he may have been out of the lane, but said he had ample reason to be.

"I try to be a law-abiding cyclist, but this is a habit-

ing problem," he said. "The road is filled with obstructions, people park in it, and when you try to get on

the bridge, people are turning into you."

Capt. Mark DiPaolo, the commanding officer of the 84th Precinct, has dismissed the notion that there was a ticket blitz for cyclists, though he did say that such tickets were part of the precinct's effort "to protect pedestrians and cyclists and injuries."

DiPaolo said he could not comment about the specific ticket, as he has not seen it.

Brauer was incredulous, recalling that on that day, he observed cops only handing out tickets to cyclists and not automobile drivers.

"If part of the reason you give tickets is to deter people and try to get them to drive legally — and you don't do it — then what are you really accomplishing?" he asked, rhetorically. "You make it harder for people to ride a bike and you are turning a blind eye to people driving in an un-

safe manner."

On his way to his work, Brauer encountered Adam White, a cyclist and personal injury lawyer who offered a bit of pro bono advice.

## MEAN Streets

The battle for Brooklyn's byways

"These cops are charging cyclists with a law that does not apply," said White, who had advised Brauer to argue that the traffic statute allows cyclists to use their judgment, and use the lanes when they are safe to use.

"You can be convicted of something that doesn't apply in New York City," White noted. "If they are charging you with something that doesn't apply, it's impossible for you to defend yourself, it's a violation of due process."

The judge agreed — and tossed the ticket.

## Norah Jones to Celebrate

By Stephen Brown  
The Brooklyn Paper

Cobble Hill resident Norah Jones will get back to what she does best — performing before adoring audiences instead of irking her window-hating neighbors — and kick off celebrate Brooklyn with a free concert on June 9.

The performance is worthy of a banner headline — one that might erase earlier large type about the sultry singer's battle with her neighbors over plans to add 10 windows to her swank Amity Street crib, an out-touche to some locals blasted as out of touch with Cobble Hill's aesthetic.

Eventually, the number of windows was reduced to seven in what appeared to be a backroom compromise between the singer and her neighbors.

That allows Jones to get back to making music instead of legal war. Her most recent album, "The Fall," has enjoyed both critical and commercial success. Nevertheless, she will have a tough act to follow — last year's opener, David Byrne, performed before roughly 7,000 people — the largest audience in the history of the outdoor concert series.



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## Collared after sexual assault

### 94TH PRECINCT

Greenpoint-Williamsburg

A jerk was arrested after he forced himself on a woman who was staying at his Engert Avenue home for the night on March 25.

The 28-year-old woman told police that she was sleeping on the couch at the home, which is between McGuinness Boulevard and Humboldt Street, at about 11:30 pm when the perp started to "fondle" her without her permission.

He made some sexually suggestive comments, but the suggestion was not welcome, setting off a struggle that resulted in injuries to the woman's neck and back. She was able to break free and ran upstairs to another apartment to call police, who promptly arrested the criminal.

### Laptop swipe

An unlocked door cost a Kent Street renter her computer on March 26.

A thug opened the back door of the home, which is between N. Third Street and Metropolitan Avenue, between midnight and 6 am and took the laptop while the victim was at her boyfriend's house. She told police she came home to find the door wide open.

### Stranded!

Some juice-less creeps stole a man's truck battery and a couple gallons of diesel on March 22.

The man tried starting his truck when it was parked on Humboldt Street between Calver Street and Meserole Avenue at about 6 pm, only to find that the battery and its wires were completely ripped from the engine.

What's worse, the fuel he kept in the truck bed was also taken. — **Andy Campbell**

### 78TH PRECINCT

Park Slope

### Cig swipe

A thief stole a bevy of tobacco products from a car parked on Union Street on March 19.

A witness told cops that three thugs pulled up in a green SUV beside the car parked between New Street and Third Avenue at around 11:30 am. They then swiped \$1,600 in blunts, lighters and cigarettes.

### Laundried

A thief busted into a Fourth Avenue laundromat and left with a sack of quarters.

The owner of the joint, which is between Baltic and Warren streets, told cops that she returned to her business at 7:30 am on March 27, when she found \$1,000 — \$800 of it in quarters — missing. She said that the thief likely forced open the steel shutter and then slipped in the front door, which was unlocked.

### 76TH PRECINCT

Cobble Hill-Red Hook

### Perks peril

A crazy brawl at the crowded Smith Street nightclub Perks resulted in two arrests and bite marks on cops on March 25.

It all began when a local lady started bawling inside the club at Warren Street at around 9:47 pm. As cops tried to slap the cuffs on her and stop the fight, her boyfriend seized the opportunity to swipe a wallet that had fallen to the ground during the scuffle.

To add to his problems, he also attempted to prevent cops from arresting his blood-thirsty ladyfriend. Eventually, he was sporting metal bracelets — but his girlfriend would not go so easy.

After striking another club-goer in the face, she managed to clock an officer and bite him on the hand. An hour and a half later, the boozey woman was still fuming at the mouth at the 76th Precinct, and stomped on another cop as he tried to haul her off to the hospital.

### Bunch of DS

A young thug stole an 11-year-old's Nintendo DS on March 26.

The pre-adolescent gamer told cops that he was entering the Carroll Street subway stop at President and Smith Streets at around 3:30 pm when three teens approached him.

One of them said, "Give me your DS!" To which the youngster cleverly replied, "I don't have DS."

But the perp would not back down, saying, "Yes, you do! I have a gun, you better give it to me before I shoot you!"

But this victim was not convinced. "You don't have a gun," he said. "Show me!"

Apparently, the brute was bluffing about the gun, but not about his desire for the portable gaming system. He grabbed the victim's bookbag as he tried to face the stairs of the subway. He then put him in a headlock, snatched the DS, and took off running with his cronies.

### Cement swipe

A thief stole a cement mixer used for renovations of a bag-of-war for it near the corner of Washington and Greene avenues on March 28. But the crime did not end there.

The victim of the 2:15 pm incident told cops that a man driving down the street heard her cries and got out to chase the cell snatcher. A second passerby on a bike soon joined the chase.

When the perp saw the posse pursuing him he dropped the cellphone and kept moving — but that didn't stop his pursuers, who finally tackled him on Clinton Avenue between Lafayette and Greene avenues.

Officer Thomas Miller got the coffee.

### Choke hold-ups

Watch out Fort Greene pedestrians! Two women were robbed and put in choke holds on the same day. Here's a roundup:

A thief approached a woman from behind, grabbing her neck and choking her on March 23 to steal her backpack and laptop. The victim told cops that the violent offender slammed her face into a parked car and told her to "shut up," at around 1:50 pm.

The perp got away rounding the corner of Clason and Gates avenues with her goods in hand.

Later that day a thug wrapped his arm around a woman's neck at around 10:35 pm. The choke victim said that the perp punched her in the face and said, "Don't move or I'll blow your head off!"

The group got away with the iPod and cash.

### Target tricker

Yet another woman's purse was stolen at the Target at the Atlantic Terminal Mall on March 22.

The victim told police that she noticed that her bag was gone when she headed for the

## POLICE BLOTTER

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[BrooklynPaper.com/blotter](http://BrooklynPaper.com/blotter)

### Charged card

Two thugs stole a woman's purse from her car on Dean Street on March 23, but were later arrested after being caught using her credit cards.

The victim told cops that she had parked her car between Bond and Hoyt streets at around 11:30 am. When she returned about seven hours later, her purse, containing her two credit cards, was missing.

That same day, only 10 minutes later, Officer Anna Carrasco noticed a shady 37-year-old lady in a car on Smith Street between Bergen and Wyckoff streets without a seatbelt. Before Carrasco could approach the car, the woman burst from the car with her hand in her left pocket, which turned out to contain a knife.

Closer inspection revealed that she was in possession of one of the victim's credit cards, which she had already used. — **Stephen Brown**

### 88TH PRECINCT

Fort Greene-Clinton Hill

### Tug a thug

A thief grabbed a woman's cellphone after wearing a bag-of-war for it near the corner of Washington and Greene avenues on March 28. But the crime did not end there.

The victim of the 2:15 pm incident told cops that a man driving down the street heard her cries and got out to chase the cell snatcher. A second passerby on a bike soon joined the chase.

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### Target tricker

Yet another woman's purse was stolen at the Target at the Atlantic Terminal Mall on March 22.

The victim told police that she noticed that her bag was gone when she headed for the

checkout line at 5:45 pm. She also lost three \$45 Metrocards and credit cards.

### Cell swipe

A sneaky crook stole a Sidekick cellphone out of a man's hands on March 16 near the corner of Myrtle and Clermont avenues.

The victim said he was walking with his sister when a man approached asking what time it was at around 5 pm. When he removed the device from his pocket to check, the stranger grabbed the phone and ran away.

### 84TH PRECINCT

Brooklyn Heights-DUMBO-Borough Hill-Downtown

### Three on three

A trio of brigands robbed another trio of average joes on March 28.

The three victims told cops they had reached Jarameno and Clinton streets at around 12:30 pm when a sketchy thug sneaked up on them from behind and pulled out a gun. He then ordered them to empty their pockets and drop to the ground.

Once on the ground, two bodies emerged from the shadows and patted down the spooned victims. They lost three iPods, three cell phones, and an assortment of purses, IDs, and credit cards worth \$3,300.

### Old and mad

Three thugs mugged an 83-year-old man for his wallet on Wyckoff Street on March 23.

The geriatric victim told cops that he was between Smith and Hoyt streets at around midnight when one of the brigands sneaked up from behind, put a hand around his neck and said, "Don't move."

Meanwhile, two other brigands held his arms and rifled through his pockets, eventually matching his wallet. The cowards got \$80.

### Mutt miffed

A pair of punks robbed a man at gunpoint while he walked his dog on March 28.

The dog-lover told cops he was walking his pooch at Aitken and Sidney places at around 12:30 am when a guy approached him from behind, pulled out a Glock, and said — somewhat confusingly — "Drop everything and don't let go of the dog."

His partner in crime then patted down the victim, but did not mess with the dog.

The pair got an iPhone, \$70, and a bunch of credit cards.

### 68TH PRECINCT

Bay Ridge

### Three on one

A 28-year-old was held up at knife-point and robbed of \$300 during a late-night jaunt on 67th Street on March 25.

The victim told police that he was wearing 13th Avenue at around 11:20 pm when the thugs jumped him.

One of the thieves flashed a knife as his accomplices rifled through the victim's pockets, taking his cash, cops said.

### 60-minute steal

A thief with an acute sense of timing looted a Fourth Avenue apartment just as his victim left his home to run some errands on March 22.

The 33-year-old tenant told police that he had left his apartment, which is near 69th Street, at 4 pm and returned an hour later to find his front door open.

During that time, a crook had crept into his apartment through a fire escape window and taken a laptop computer and \$500.

— **Thomas Tracy**

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April 2-8, 2010



# Park in drive!

Brooklyn Bridge Park's Pier 1 is open — and it's a keeper

By Andy Campbell  
The Brooklyn Paper

There's plenty to see in and around Brooklyn Bridge Park's Pier 1, which opened its walkways, playground and greenspace on March 22.

The views of Manhattan are panoramic, the playground exhilarating and the landscaping urbane and satisfying. Even though park-goers are not allowed to use the lawn until the roots set — probably a few more weeks — early reports are positive.

"We love the playground and the grass area — it's huge!" said Cobble Hill resident Donna Kelly.

The park's patrons aren't the only ones benefiting from Pier 1's allure. Businesses near the entrance at the foot of Old Fulton Street are seeing an upswing in customers.

"It's great for the neighborhood and it's bringing in all kinds of people," said Peter Thristino, owner of Pete's Downtown restaurant across the street from the entrance. "I'm definitely happy to be here during this historic time." (Though, Thristino isn't too happy about the horses asking to use his bathroom, since the park does not provide one.)

So what, exactly, can you do at the first portion of what may someday be a 1.7-mile, \$350-million strip of green from DUMBO to Atlantic Avenue? We've explored and did the dirty work for you — here's a step-by-step field guide for Pier 1:

## The walkways!

Walking in, tree-lined concrete pathways career through almost three acres of lawn, past the playground and up to sweeping views of the Manhattan skyline and Brooklyn Bridge.

The wide paths offer ample room for dog-walking, jogging around the park's perimeter and stopping to enjoy the view.

## The promenade!

It's 30 feet wide, sports long rows of



benches and it lines the Brooklyn waterfront. Do you need anything more awesome than that?

From this vantage point, you can use on-site scopes to check out the Statue of Liberty, the Brooklyn Bridge, or the jealous types on that other island. A massive flight of granite stairs — Brooklyn's first stoop, if you will — bisects the promenade.

Called the "Granite Prospect," this stairway was made from steps salvaged from the Roosevelt Island Bridge reconstruction. Once it's opened to the public after fighting and rails are installed, you'll get an even more dramatic outlook point.

## The playground!

This kiddo park is for the real youngins. It's got a set of small swings, a couple plastic bubble-like apparatuses for climbing,

and a few turrets jutting out of the ground for spinning around.

It's not the most high-tech playground in the world, but a rubbery platform and a slew of benches lining the gate makes this enclosed area a safe place to rest and let the kids romp.

**The seating!**  
The benches, which line all the walkways, the promenade and the lawn, were built with wood from the demolished National Cold Storage Warehouse, which laid claim to the site before it was flattened.

**The pond!**  
This small pond is the beginning of a series of water gardens that will run along the entirety of Pier 1's edge. It's not much to look at yet — but designers

say a "dramatic display of water-loving plants," including swamp rose and pussy willow, will be planted along a creek that flows into the pond. Sorry, no swimming at the park yet!

**The neighbors!**  
Just outside the pier, there are several restaurants on Old Fulton Street that benefit from the park's customer base.

"It's a lot more beautiful than the trucking facility that was in its place," said Brooklyn Ice Cream Factory owner Mark Thompson. "It's great to see all these people out so early in spring."

But while owners agreed that the new lawn is gorgeous and will bring in more clientele during warmer months, some had their contentions.

"I can't believe there are no toilet facilities — now my customers have to line up to use my bathroom," said Pete's Downtown owner Thristino. "We have to spend money to man the door, so people won't come in just to use the facilities."

That said, the customers of the park (and restaurants) are happy. On Thursday, Boerum Hill resident Anders Thompson brought his smiling son into the ice cream shop — which sits on its own small pier adjacent to the park — for an after-stroll cone.

"It's a great place to have a walk and a snack in the same outing," he said, his son Sebastian gobbling a scoop of strawberry. "I can wait until more recreations open up."

Oh, and the toilets will be working in three weeks, we're told.

Brooklyn Bridge Park Pier 1 (Old Fulton Street at Furman Street in DUMBO), (718) 602-0603 or (212) 803-3822. To get there, take the A/C train to High Street or the B25 bus to the end. Less-convenient options include the F train to York Street, the M/R to Court Street or the 2/3 train to Clark Street. New York Water Taxi service will resume on June 30.

## CINEMA

### French star

Skip the latest 3-D box office gimmick and get acquainted with one of cinema's giants this month.

François Truffaut called Jean Renoir's body of work "the most alive films in the history of the cinema, films which still breathe 40 years after they were made."

BAM celebrates that legacy with a five-week retrospective of the late French director's work.

A prolific and enduring filmmaker, Renoir started his craft in the silent era, graduating to sound and then color, without his films ever losing their power.

Twenty-one of Renoir's films, including the masterpieces, "Grand Illusion," a World War I drama, and the society spoof, "The Rules of the Game," will be screened.

Jean Renoir retrospective at BAM Rose Cinema [30 Lafayette Ave. between Ashland Place and St. Felix Street in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100] runs April 5-May 11. Tickets \$12 (\$8 members). For info, visit [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

—Meredith Deliso

## FASHION

### Loving Haiti

Brooklyn fashion designers are looking beyond their hemlines to the plight of Haiti's quake victims.

The glamorous BK Fashion Week (end) runway show returns on April 11, but this time around, some of the profits will support earthquake recovery efforts.

Due to financial constraints, the Week (end) will feature several Brooklyn-based designers showing their fall and winter collections on a single, jam-packed day.

Flushing resident Gerald Duroseau is putting the final touches on his glamorous cocktail dresses and evening gowns, which are inspired by his childhood in Haiti.

"I lived there until I was 7," the designer explained. "With everything that's going on down there, I didn't want to do anything dark. I wanted to do something colorful and vibrant because the people down there are going through a lot."

That will be evident when his first model struts down the runway.

"The first dress is made of red Rayon and covered with silk organza. The model will have the Haitian flag in her hand and I'm going to have the Haitian anthem playing," Duroseau said.

BK Fashion Week (end) at Steiner Studios [15 Washington Ave. at Flushing Avenue in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, (718) 622-0731, April 11, 6 p.m. Tickets are \$35. For info, visit [www.bkfashionweekend.com](http://www.bkfashionweekend.com).

—Michèle De Meglio

## THEATER

### Towel off?

Sean Edwards Lewis is used to doing underground theater. With his ensemble Lilac Co. and St. John's Theatre, he's performed primarily in a church basement in Greenpoint.

Recent productions have brought the theater group above ground to Zebulon in Williamsburg and Storefront Space in Greenpoint. That's

where you can see them in their next production, a work-in-progress about cops and coping called "Cop Piece."

The original serial drama follows a beat cop and a detective as they stake out a pizza joint in New York.

"It's fun for the whole family — if you're over 17," said Lewis, who pulls an Orson Welles by writing, directing and starring in the production.

Of course, great theater is a mystery — one that was not exactly solved by the bizarre press photo that Lewis sent over: it showed him, wearing only a towel, by the side of a cheap motel pool. What's up with that?

"I can't talk about that," said Lewis.

"Cop Piece" runs Fridays and Saturdays in April, as well as May 1, at 8:30 p.m. at Storefront Space (94 Norman Ave. at Manhattan Avenue, no phone). There is a \$10 donation. For info, visit [www.stjohnstheatre.org](http://www.stjohnstheatre.org).

—Meredith Deliso

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1112-1116, 1117-1121, 1122-1126, 1127-1131, 1132-1136, 1137-1141, 1142-1146, 1147-1151, 1152-1156, 1157-1161, 1162-1166, 1167-1171, 1172-1176, 1177-1181, 1182-1186, 1187-1191, 1192-1196, 1197-1201, 1202-1206, 1207-1211, 1212-1216, 1217-1221, 1222-1226, 1227-1231, 1232-1236, 1237-1241, 1242-1246, 1247-1251, 1252-1256, 1257-1261, 1262-1266, 1267-1271, 1272-1276, 1277-1281, 1282-1286, 1287-1291, 1292-1296, 1297-1301, 1302-1306, 1307-1311, 1312-1316, 1317-1321, 1322-1326, 1327-1331, 1332-1336, 1337-1341, 1342-1346, 1347-1351, 1352-1356, 1357-1361, 1362-1366, 1367-1371, 1372-1376, 1377-1381, 1382-1386, 1387-1391, 1392-1396, 1397-1401, 1402-1406, 1407-1411, 1412-1416, 1417-1421, 1422-1426, 1427-1431, 1432-1436, 1437-1441, 1442-1446, 1447-1451, 1452-1456, 1457-1461, 1462-1466, 1467-1471, 1472-1476, 1477-1481, 1482-1486, 1487-1491, 1492-1496, 1497-1501, 1502-1506, 1507-1511, 1512-1516, 1517-1521, 1522-1526, 1527-1531, 1532-1536, 1537-1541, 1542-1546, 1547-1551, 1552-1556, 1557-1561, 1562-1566, 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2022-2026, 2027-2031, 2032-2036, 2037-2041, 2042-2046, 2047-2051, 2052-2056, 2057-2061, 2062-2066, 2067-2071, 2072-2076, 2077-2081, 2082-2086, 2087-2091, 2092-2096, 2097-2101, 2102-2106, 2107-2111, 2112-2116, 2117-2121, 2122-2126, 2127-2131, 2132-2136, 2137-2141, 2142-2146, 2147-2151, 2152-2156, 2157-2161, 2162-2166, 2167-2171, 2172-2176, 2177-2181, 2182-2186, 2187-2191, 2192-2196, 2197-2201, 2202-2206, 2207-2211, 2212-2216, 2217-2221, 2222-2226, 2227-2231, 2232-2236, 2237-2241, 2242-2246, 2247-2251, 2252-2256, 2257-2261, 2262-2266, 2267-2271, 2272-2276, 2277-2281, 2282-2286, 2287-2291, 2292-2296, 2297-2301, 2302-2306, 2307-2311, 2312-2316, 2317-2321, 2322-2326, 2327-2331, 2332-2336, 2337-2341, 2342-2346, 2347-2351, 2352-2356, 2357-2361, 2362-2366, 2367-2371, 2372-2376, 2377-2381, 2382-2386, 2387-2391, 2392-2396, 2397-2401, 2402-2406, 2407-2411, 2412-2416, 2417-2421, 2422-2426, 2427-2431, 2432-2436, 2437-2441, 2442-2446, 2447-2451, 2452-2456, 2457-2461, 2462-2466, 2467-2471, 2472-2476, 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3387-3391, 3392-3396, 3397-3401, 3402-3406, 3407-3411, 3412-3416, 3417-3421, 3422-3426, 3427-3431, 3432-3436, 3437-3441, 3442-3446, 3447-3451, 3452-3456, 3457-3461, 3462-3466, 3467-3471, 3472-3476, 3477-3481, 3482-3486, 3487-3491, 3492-3496, 3497-3501, 3502-3506, 3507-3511, 3512-3516, 3517-3521, 3522-3526, 3527-3531, 3532-3536, 3537-3541, 3542-3546, 3547-3551, 3552-3556, 3557-3561, 3562-3566, 3567-3571, 3572-3576, 3577-3581, 3582-3586, 3587-3591, 3592-3596, 3597-3601, 3602-3606, 3607-3611, 3612-3616, 3617-3621, 3622-3626, 3627-3631, 3632-3636, 3637-3641, 3642-3646, 3647-3651, 3652-3656, 3657-3661, 3662-3666, 3667-3671, 3672-3676, 3677-3681, 3682-3686, 3687-3691, 3692-3696, 3697-3701, 3702-3706, 3707-3711, 3712-3716, 3717-3721, 3722-3726, 3727-3731, 3732-3736, 3737-3741, 3742-3746, 3747-3751, 3752-3756, 3757-3761, 3762-3766, 3767-3771, 3772-3776, 3777-3781, 3782-3786, 3787-3791, 3792-3796, 3797-3801, 3802-3806, 3807-3811, 3812-3816, 3817-3821, 3822-3826, 3827-3831, 3832-3836, 3837-3841, 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4297-4301, 4302-4306, 4307-4311, 4312-4316, 4317-4321, 4322-4326, 4327-4331, 4332-4336, 4337-4341, 4342-4346, 4347-4351, 4352-4356, 4357-4361, 4362-4366, 4367-4371, 4372-4376, 4377-4381, 4382-4386, 4387-4391, 4392-4396, 4397-4401, 4402-4406, 4407-4411, 4412-4416, 4417-4421, 4422-4426, 4427-4431, 4432-4436, 4437-4441, 4442-4446, 4447-4451, 4452-4456, 4457-4461, 4462-4466, 4467-4471, 4472-4476, 4477-4481, 4482-4486, 4487-4491, 4492-4496, 4497-4501, 4502-4506, 4507-4511, 4512-4516, 4517-4521, 4522-4526, 4527-4531, 4532-4536, 4537-4541, 4542-4546, 4547-4551, 4552-4556, 4557-4561, 4562-4566, 4567-4571, 4572-4576, 4577-4581, 4582-4586, 4587-4591, 4592-4596, 4597-4601, 4602-4606, 4607-4611, 4612-4616, 4617-4621, 4622-4626, 4627-4631, 4632-4636, 4637-4641, 4642-4646, 4647-4651, 4652-4656, 4657-4661, 4662-4666, 4667-4671, 4672-4676, 4677-4681, 4682-4686, 4687-4691, 4692-4696, 4697-4701, 4702-4706, 4707-4711, 4712-4716, 4717-4721, 4722-4726, 4727-4731, 4732-4736, 4737-4741, 4742-4746, 4747-4751, 4752-4756, 4757-4761, 4762-4766, 4767-4771, 4772-4776, 4777-4781, 4782-4786, 4787-4791, 4792-4796, 4797-4801, 4802-4806, 4807-4811, 4812-4816, 4817-4821, 4822-4826, 4827-4831, 4832-4836, 4837-4841, 4842-4846, 4847-4851, 4852-4856, 4857-4861, 4862-4866, 4867-4871, 4872-4876, 4877-4881, 4882-4886, 4887-4891, 4892-4896, 4897-4901, 4902-4906, 4907-4911, 4912-4916, 4917-4921, 4922-4926, 4927-4931, 4932-4936, 4937-4941, 4942-4946, 4947-4951, 4952-4956, 4957-4961, 4962-4966, 4967-4971, 4972-4976, 4977-4981, 4982-4986, 4987-4991, 4992-4996, 4997-5001, 5002-5006, 5007-5011, 5012-5016, 5017-5021, 5022-5026, 5027-5031, 5032-5036, 5037-5041, 5042-5046, 5047-5051, 5052-5056, 5057-5061, 5062-5066, 5067-5071, 5072-5076, 5077-5081, 5082-5086, 5087-5091, 5092-5096, 5097-5101, 5102-5106, 5107-5111, 5112-5116, 5117-5121, 5122-5126, 5127-5131, 5132-5136, 5137-5141, 5142-5146, 5147-5151, 5152-5156, 5157-5161, 5162-5166, 5167-5171, 5172-5176, 5177-5181, 5182-5186, 5187-5191, 5192-5196, 5197-5201, 5202-5206, 5207-5211, 5212-5216, 5217-5221, 5222-5226, 5227-5231, 5232-5236, 5237-5241, 5242-5246, 5247-5251, 5252-5256, 5257-5261, 5262-5266, 5267-5271, 5272-5276, 5277-5281, 5282-5286, 5287-5291, 5292-5296, 5297-5301, 5302-5306, 5307-5311, 5312-5316, 5317-5321, 5322-5326, 5327-5331, 5332-5336, 5337-5341, 5342-5346, 5347-5351, 5352-5356, 5357-5361, 5362-5366, 5367-5371, 5372-5376, 5377-5381, 5382-5386, 5387-5391, 5392-5396, 5397-5401, 5402-5406, 5407-5411, 5412-5416, 5417-5421, 5422-5426, 5427-5431, 5432-5436, 5437-5441, 5442-5446, 5447-5451, 5452-5456, 5457-5461, 5462-5466, 5467-5471, 5472-5476, 5477-5481, 5482-5486, 5487-5491, 5492-5496, 5497-5501, 5502-5506, 5507-5511, 5512-5516, 5517-5521





## Monster mash

No, this isn't some sort of Lady Gaga tribute. "Monstrefaces," a new exhibition at Tattoo Culture in Williamsburg is a throwback to Saturday morning cartoons from the 1970s and '80s, underground comics and Garbage Pat Kids trading cards.

By the dozens, Gownas-based artist Frank Russo has crafted pop art

headstuds of plywood, brightly colored, psychedelic monsters with names like "Bride of Demon Ghoul," a Kiss-esque, serpentine figure, and "Toxoid," kind of like the Hulk, if he were exposed to radiation that melted his face.

The pieces—one to three feet in height—will adorn the walls of the gallery, and they will ultimately be part of a set of collectible art trading cards, in

old-style wax packaging, out later this year through MonsterWax Inc. So you can have your Monstrefaces in miniature, too. "Monstrefaces" at Tattoo Culture Gallery (129 Roebeling St. between N. Fifth and N. Sixth streets) opens Friday, April 2 and runs until May 6. For info, visit [www.tattooculture.net](http://www.tattooculture.net). —Meredith Deliso

# Follow this 'Cue

## New BBQ joint opens in Williamsburg

By Kristen V. Brown  
for The Brooklyn Paper

There is barbecue, and then there is Fatty 'Cue. Zaki Pelaccio's new Williamsburg restaurant that hopes to redefine the way you think about barbecue.

The new eatery is a much-delayed dream two years in the making—the fusion of Pelaccio's well-known take on Southeast Asian fare prevalent throughout the Fatty franchise, and the barbecue sensibilities of pit master Robbie Richter, formerly of Hill Country in Chelsea.

"The base flavors of our barbecue are the same as



subtle, aged oak wood instead of hickory, and meats are rubbed with Southern Asian flavors such as Thai chilies. The menu, comprised of small plates, large plates

side dishes to be light," said chef Andrew Pressler, expelling the notion that barbecued meats need heavy sides like mac and cheese.

Pressler treated us to some of his sublime version of haba gashoush—rings of bok choy, green mango and green beans for dipping—plus a bowl of cockles with house-smoked bacon before moving on the masterpiece on his menu: Red Curry Rubbed Duck (\$14). Banish all notions you have of duck: his 130-degree, four-hour, 100-percent humidity slow-cooking method transforms this sometimes foul bird into a supremely juicy decadent delight.

Fatty 'Cue (91 S. Sixth Street between Bedford and Berry streets in Williamsburg, (718) 599-3900). Closed Mondays.

—Kristen V. Brown

## 9 DAYS...

Continued from page 6

Greene, (718) 636-4129, [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**TARGET FIRST SATURDAYS, "TO LIVE FOREVER":**

Curator talk, art discussion, music, dance party and more. Free, 5-11 pm. Brooklyn Museum (200 Eastern Pkwy. at Washington Avenue in Prospect Heights, (718) 638-5000). [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org).

**SUN, APRIL 4**

**OUTDOORS AND TOURS**

**CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL:**

VAL: See Saturday, April 3.

**PERFORMANCE**

**THEATER, "THE CRUCIBLE":**

3 pm. See Friday, April 3.

**THEATER, "SHOOT 2 WIN":**

7:30 pm. See Saturday, April 3.

**THEATER, "SWINGIN' AT JACK'S":**

8 pm. See Friday, April 3.

**MUSIC, STEPHANE WREMBEL:**

Mixes up the traditional Django repertoire along gypsy swing. 7 pm. Barbed 176 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 665-9171. [www.bartbrooklyn.com](http://www.bartbrooklyn.com).

**SALES AND MARKETS**

**ART, POP-UP ART STORE:**

Noon-5 pm. See Friday, April 3.

**PS 321 FLEA MARKET:**

9 am-5 pm. See Saturday, April 3.

**GREENMARKET AND MARKERS MARKET:**

Crafts and produce under the same roof. 10 am-5 pm. Old American Can Factory (232 Third St. between Third and Fourth avenues in Gowanus, [www.communitymarkets.biz](http://www.communitymarkets.biz)).

**ARTISTS AND FLEAS:**

Noon-6 pm. See Saturday, April 3.

**OTHER**

**FILM, "STOP":**

Part of the Bill Gunn retrospective. \$12 (58 members). 2 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**FILM, "THE ANGEL LEE":**

Part of the Bill Gunn retrospective. \$12 (58 members). 4:30, 6:50 and 9:15 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**READING, SAM LUPATE:**

Author of "The Ask." Free. 5 pm. Knitting Factory (361 Metropolitan Ave. at Havemeyer Street in Williamsburg, (718) 229-6696). [nyknittingfactory.com](http://nyknittingfactory.com).

**MOON, APRIL 7**

**CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL:**

VAL: See Saturday, April 3.

**TALK, DANIEL LIEBKIND:**

The renowned architect and urban designer will discuss his work and career. Free. 6 pm. Pratt Institute (61 St. James Pl. between Lafayette Avenue and Clinton Place in Clinton Hill, (718) 636-4304). [www.pratt.edu](http://www.pratt.edu).

**FILM, "JELLYFISH (MEDIUM)":**

Part of the "Surreal World of Edgar Kees" series. \$12 (58 members). 7 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**THEATER, "SHOOT 2 WIN":**

7:30 pm. See Saturday, April 3.

**BINDLESTIFF FAMILY CIRKUS:**

Variety stage show. \$5. Gallagher Art Space (16 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 222-8500). [www.gallagherartspace.com](http://www.gallagherartspace.com).

**MUSIC, TONY SCHERER AND GUESTS:**

315 Columbia St. between Hamilton Avenue and Woodhull Street in Columbia Street Waterfront, (718) 395-3214). [www.algobiz.com](http://www.algobiz.com).

**MUSIC, CHICHA LIBRE:**

Mixture of Latin rhythms, surf music and psychedelic pop. 9:30 pm. Barbed 176 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 665-9171. [www.bartbrooklyn.com](http://www.bartbrooklyn.com).

**TUES, APRIL 6**

**CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL:**

VAL: See Saturday, April 3.

**FILM, "BIRDS":**

Part of the "Surreal World of Edgar Kees" series. \$12 (58 members). 4:30, 6:50 and 9:15 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**FILM, DOCUMENTARIES BY**



Eat it: Singer Moby will read from his vegetarian-focused book, "Gristle," at PowerHouse on April 6.

**BORIS DVORNIK:**

Part of the Russian Film Series. Free. 7 pm. Brooklyn Public Library's Central branch (Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope, (718) 230-2100).

**READING, LAUNCH PARTY FOR "THE EXILE OF GIGI LANE":**

7:30 pm. Virel (126 Franklin St. at Milton Street in Greenpoint, (718) 383-0096). [www.brooklynwordpress.com](http://www.brooklynwordpress.com).

**THEATER, "SHOOT 2 WIN":**

7:30 pm. See Saturday, April 3.

**THE MOON SHOW:**

Variety show hosted by Nat Towner and Bob Waller. Free. 8 pm. The Royal Oak (594 Union Ave. at Richardson Street in Williamsburg). [www.royaloaknyc.com](http://www.royaloaknyc.com).

**TALK, ADULT EDUCATION'S "HOMESPIN AND HANDMADE":**

Featuring "Jonah Lady" Laura Silver. \$5. 8 pm. Union Hall (702 Union St. at Fifth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 636-4400). [www.unionhallnyc.com](http://www.unionhallnyc.com).

**MUSIC, SLAVIC SOUL PARTY:**

Fiery Gypsy brass, klezmer and hip-grinding American funk. \$10. 7 pm. Barbed 176 Ninth St. at Sixth Avenue in Park Slope, (718) 665-9171. [www.bartbrooklyn.com](http://www.bartbrooklyn.com).

**WED, APRIL 7**

**CHERRY BLOSSOM FESTIVAL:**

VAL: See Saturday, April 3.

**THEATER, "UNCLE VANITY":**

Cheshkov's classic. \$20-\$55. 7:30 pm. BAM Hanover Theater (651 Fulton St. at Rockwell Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4100). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**TOUR, HISTORIC TROLLEY:**

Explore Green-Wood Cemetery. Reservations are not required, but recommended. \$20 (50 for Historic Fund members). 1 pm. Green-Wood Cemetery (25th St. at Fifth Avenue in Green-Wood Heights, (718) 768-7000). [www.greenwoodcemetery.org](http://www.greenwoodcemetery.org).

**FILM, "VISCUTTERS—A LOVE STORY":**

Part of the "Surreal World of Edgar Kees" series. \$12 (58 members). 4:30, 6:50 and 9:15 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**THE ANNUAL GEORGE POLK SEMINAR:**

Reception. 5:30-6:30 pm. Kumbie Theater at Long Island University (DeKalb and Flatbush avenues in Downtown, (718) 488-1624). [www.brooklyn.liu.edu/kumbie](http://www.brooklyn.liu.edu/kumbie).

**READING, NORRIS CHURCH MAILER: Author of "A Ticket to the Circus: A Memoir."**

7:30 pm. Power-House Arena (37 Main St. at Water Street in DUMBO, (718) 666-3049). [www.powerhousearena.com](http://www.powerhousearena.com).

**THEATER, "SWAN LAKE":**

Musical theater. 7:30 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**THEATER, "SAMUEL AND ALASDAIR—A PER-SONAL HISTORY OF THE ROBOT WAR":**

8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, ANDY STATTMAN TRIO:**

Jazz. \$10. 9 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, WAGONER:**

Part of the "Surreal World of Edgar Kees" series. \$12 (58 members). 4:30, 6:50 and 9:15 pm. BAM Rose Cinema (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 636-4129). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**THEATER, "SAMUEL AND ALASDAIR—A PER-SONAL HISTORY OF THE ROBOT WAR":**

8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, BROOKLYN CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY:**

Performing selections from Beethoven's Shostakovich, Paganini, Frank. 8 pm. First Unitarian Church (50 Monroe Pl. in Brooklyn Heights, (718) 858-0718).

**MUSIC, HELENE RENAUD:**

8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**DANCE, AIR FESTIVAL:**

8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, MEGG FARRELL'S WHISKY SCHOOL:**

Folk. 8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

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Folk. 8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

and rice harvesting. \$15 (\$12 in advance). 8 pm. Brooklyn Arts Exchange (421 Fifth Ave. at Eighth Street in Park Slope, (718) 832-0008). [www.bae.org](http://www.bae.org).

**MUSIC, BEV GRANT AND THE OCCIDENTAL DAUGHTERS AND ANNE DINERMAN:**

Contemporary song of social justice with a distinct woman's point of view. \$10-\$4 kids. 8 pm. Brooklyn Society for Ethical Culture (53 Prospect Park West at Second Street in Park Slope, (718) 768-2972). [www.bsec.org](http://www.bsec.org).

**THEATER, "COPIES":**

8 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, QUEEN AMINAH:**

Neo-soul. Free. 7 pm. BAM Cafe (30 Lafayette Ave. at Ashland Place in Fort Greene, (718) 230-4100). [www.bam.org](http://www.bam.org).

**MUSIC, "ARIES RISING":**

Featuring DJ's Eshin, Fig & Ashley, Steppa and more. \$7 before 11 pm, \$10 after. \$5 if Aries. 9 pm. Littlefield (622 Degraw St. between Fourth and Fifth avenues in Gowanus, (718) 855-3388). [www.littlefieldnyc.com](http://www.littlefieldnyc.com).

**MUSIC, THE CHAPIN SISTERS:**

Folk rock. 9 pm. See Friday, April 2.

**MUSIC, BLIND BOY PAK-TON:**

Psychedelic, guitar, harmonica and several other instruments. 9 pm. See Friday, April 2.

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# Community news. Un-decaffeinated.

If you don't want to miss what's happening  
around town, we're your go-to.

**Your Community Paper.** Told ya.

***The Brooklyn Paper***





# Cracking the da Vinci code

## Bensonhurst man claims he's done Leonardo one better on Mona Lisa

By Andy Campbell  
The Brooklyn Paper

Look, the Mona Lisa's great, but Leonardo da Vinci got her all wrong. That's at least what Melchiorre Martino claims. The 79-year-old Bensonhurst retiree says that he's improved on da Vinci's so-called masterpiece because he has one thing that the Renaissance legend lacked: electricity.

"See all these blacks and dark colors in da Vinci's 'Mona Lisa'?" Martino asked. "It's because he worked in the dark. If he did it my way, with electric lights in his studio, he would have had more color."

So Martino spent three weeks with all his lights on and all the oil paints he could



The original.

find. The result is a far more vivid print, albeit one without any of the background detail over which da Vinci apparently sweated — not that Martino is impressed.

"I don't need all that [background] stuff," he said, grinning. "Where was he standing when da Vinci painted it? We don't know — but we do know that he finished part of the painting in one place, and the rest in Paris, so the background doesn't matter."

A smudged brown and black backdrop in Martino's painting attests to that. But some New York art world snobs beg to differ. Carol Krinsky, professor of art history at New York University, said da Vinci's original is a masterpiece of the woman sitting in it.

"Martino has worked hard and produced a reasonable likeness of the [Mona Lisa]," Krinsky told The Brooklyn Paper, "but the background



HE'S DONE IT! Bensonhurst's own Melchiorre Martino has recreated (and improved, if you ask him) Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa! The dead painter had it all wrong.

is all wrong — much too prominent, much too dark, and not in the right scale. It matters."

She also noted that Martino made the copy of the "current" Mona Lisa painting, which is covered with so

## MONA LISA SMACKDOWN!

If Leonardo da Vinci were still alive, he'd be in the middle of a rivalry with Bensonhurst resident Melchiorre Martino. The 80-something painter has a beef with the Mona Lisa — that's why he repainted it — but can he beat his rival in our first-ever Mona Lisa smackdown?

MELCHIORRE MARTINO	NAME	LEONARDO DA VINCI
The Bensonhurst Bambino	Nickname	The Florentine Flinger
"Dinner for the Dinosaurs"	Most famous painting	The Mona Lisa
Light colors, all that background mess replaced with black and brown smudges	Approach to "Mona Lisa"	Dark colors, sweeping green background, frowning face
World War II, as a submarine seaman	War served in	Second Italian War, 1499, as a military architect and engineer
Very popular on Bay Parkway	Legacy	One of the greatest artists of all time

much varnish at this point that many of its original colors can't no longer be seen."

Martino remains unfazed. The "Martino Lisa" is just the latest instant classic churned out of the painter's Bay Parkway series. He started his craft only 15 years ago — inspired by one of his 12 kids, who has cerebral palsy — with a painting of brontosaurus munching on greenery.

Next he moved to a reproduction of Pablo Picasso's "The Dreamer," and then on to more of his own work, which lines the walls of his small apartment. He admits that on his first go at the brunette with the famously indifferent gaze, Martino wanted to match da Vinci's light-free environment. But he was "pleased with his first try."

Now, however, Martino said his new improved

canvas has already garnered attention from buyers — one of whom offered \$15,000. But he doesn't know if he wants to sell it. The goal is just to have people see it.

"This is a treat for the people," Martino said. "I don't have much time left, and this is what I love to do, so why not?"

Then he grinned and added, "My mom never knew I could paint. Look at me now!"

## SWAN...

Continued from page 1

— that is absurd!" said Ed Bahlman, who observes the swans daily, and has been at the vanguard of an ongoing tale of dead animals, chicken heads, entrails and arson that has kept park-goers riveted for two weeks.

"This swan was not murdered,"

But Bobby Horvath, the li-

censed wildlife rehabilitator who was called in on Friday to save the ailing bird, says it was likely a homicide.

"We suspect she was beaten up by other swans," said Horvath, who treated John Boy at his Nassau County home during her final four days. "The bird had good bodyweight — but it had suffered some sort of

[blunt] trauma."

"Trauma? Like a murder?"

"She had swelling in one leg," Horvath continued. "Couldn't walk. The animal was dirty and looked like it was beaten up. This animal's condition was consistent with other swans that have been beaten up by other adult swans."

On Friday, Horvath began a regimen of force feeding John Boy, plus treating her with heat and antibiotics — all to no avail. John Boy went to the big lake in the sky on Monday.

But his efforts did little to silence the conspiracy theories from swan-lovers, who believe that John Boy succumbed to the putrid stew that resulted from dumping by the so-called "Butcher of Prospect Park."

Several other animals — including a duck, an opossum and turtles — have also turned up dead along the lakefront. Some have been murdered, others have died of other unnatural causes.

"Maybe the body parts poisoned the water," said Susan Yuen, who first alerted the authorities to John Boy's pitiful state. "I don't know why these animals are dropping dead one by one."

Yuen first noticed John Boy had become unresponsive last Friday.

"She took ill so fast. She should have an autopsy," said Yuen.

That's not going to happen — and not only because John Boy has already been cremated, said Horvath, who is also a firefighter who was involved in the eventual release of the coyote that stalked Manhattan last week.

"An animal has to be endangered or threatened for the state to want to test it — or it must be a victim of a crime," he said. "In my opinion, it didn't meet any of those criteria."

Anticipating charges that he is merely part of a cover-up, Horvath added, "No one is telling me what to say. We're not paid, we're total volunteers, no one influences my decision or influences what I say."

For now, all Bahlman and other bird-lovers can do is speculate — at least until the park comes forward with tests of the water in the lake.

Still, Horvath said that poison seemed unlikely. "Unless the [entrails] has been tampered with, it shouldn't harm the animals," he said. "They're stomachs can handle it — and water-

fowl don't go after bones, flesh and chicken heads."

Horvath suggested that the weather, more than poison, is the likely culprit for the wave of animal deaths.

"All of a sudden the weather gets nice, then gets cold again — animals that are already weak or came out of hibernation too early — the weather will kill them," Horvath said. "And as the weather improves, swans start preparing to nest [and become aggressive]. It's not uncommon, we get injured birds around this time of year."

Regardless of the cause of death, John Boy stands as the most high-profile animal to die in the middle of the mind-bending mystery that has baffled park officials for the last two weeks.

It all began with a bloody rock by the lake, which appeared to have been used as a chopping block.

Then, smashed turtle shells picked clean of flesh were discovered nearby. Later, an entire swath of rocks were in a cleared wasteland in what appeared to be an arson.

Next, a shocking pile of animal guts and chicken heads were left by the edge of the lake.

Then, the dead animals began appearing.

signed for 20 or 30 residents is a recipe for disaster." Perhaps, but some locals were sympathetic to the evicted residents.

"It's horrible!" said Ralph De La Rosa of Go Yoga, which occupies a first-floor business space. "The city should be doing something else instead of vacating them in this way."

Assemblyman Joe Lentol (D-Williamsburg) agreed and blamed the building's owner for not having the proper zoning and safety requirements for his business.

"This type of situation, where people are being kicked out on the street, should not be allowed to occur in the first place," said Lentol. "It's simply unacceptable. I never want to see people on the street in my district."

While some tenants will be relocated, an apartment complex is moving back in with her dad.

"I can't really process this right now," said Lee. "We're shoving everything into our Honda Accord."

Rep. Mike McMahon will meet with two Democratic clubs over the next two weeks. Democrats for Change at Union Church Parish Hall (8101 Ridge Blvd. between 81st and 82nd streets) in Bay Ridge, (718) 215-2667 on April 1; United Americans Democratic Club at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (7420 Fourth Ave. between 74th and 75th streets) in Bay Ridge, (718) 836-9702 on April 8. Both meetings begin at 7:30 pm.

Hagan is taking a hiatus from Brooklyn College to focus on her job and community work — like most pageant winners do, Walker said, and said she is excited to work her way toward the less-cool title of Miss America.

## OBIT...

Continued from page 1

for food scraps. "She was always the first one swimming up to you to get food," Yuen said. Ed Bahlman, another swan-lover, remembered John Boy as an assertive bird that did not allow her newcomer status to deter his desire

her in a similar light.

"She was a show-off," Bahlman said. "When she came over to you, she gave the impression she was walking on water."

John Boy is survived by Grandpa Walton and many human admirers.

— Stephen Brown

## Dig Brooklyn? Then dig this...

April is National Safe Digging Month. If you are planning to dig on your property, help us celebrate by contacting DigNet of New York City & Long Island at least 48 hours prior to have underground utility lines marked. Remind your neighbors and friends to do the same.

This free service will help you avoid service interruptions, costly property damage, or injury. If contractors are doing the digging, it's their legal responsibility to call. Don't have a yard to dig on? You can also contact us if you notice construction work happening in your area and suspect lines haven't been marked.

To learn more, visit:  
[www.DigNetNYCUL.com](http://www.DigNetNYCUL.com)

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## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Methodist unveils heart rehab program

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease is a common and debilitating disorder characterized by destruction of the lung and inflammation of the airways. It is often — but not always — associated with smoking, but either way, it is the fourth most common cause of death in the United States and is quickly becoming the third most common cause of death worldwide.

Although shortness of breath, wheezing, and cough are common manifestations of this disorder, exercise intolerance is the most significant limiting factor in an individual's daily life.

Pulmonary rehabilitation, a new program offered at New York Methodist Hospital, is a specific treatment for COPD that addresses exercise intolerance by improving muscle strength and stamina.

The primary goal of pulmonary rehabilitation is to improve the efficiency of the musculoskeletal system so that the lungs are less stressed and can function for prolonged periods of time — enabling the patient to walk, exercise and perform regular activities.

Pulmonary rehabilitation has been shown to improve three important quality of life aspects in individuals with COPD: 1) exercise capacity, 2) severity of dyspnea (shortness of breath), and 3) health-related quality of life. Evidence also shows that rehabilitation reduces frequency of hospitalization, cost of care, anxiety and depression, and cognitive function.

Rehabilitation is generally safe, although screening for cardiovascular disease is necessary due to the increased risk of a cardiac event while exercising. Individuals who are eligible for pulmonary rehabilitation must undergo an evaluation program including cardiopulmonary exercise testing in order to determine their maximum exercise capacity so that an exercise regimen can be determined. Additional testing during therapy may also be necessary to follow a patient's progress.

For information on pulmonary rehabilitation, contact the Division of Pulmonary Critical Care Medicine at New York Methodist Hospital, (718) 780-5835.

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## HOSTEL...

Continued from page 1

ing, and residential lofts. In some cases, the owner has launched the hostel, and in others, a tenant has sought to earn extra cash by converting his apartment into a mini-dormitory.

The proliferation of hostels and illegal hotels has so concerned residents and community leaders in Brooklyn that state legislators are proposing four bills that would make it illegal to rent residential buildings as a nightly basis.

Community leaders, including Community Board 1 member Ward Dennis, said that the vacate order was not surprising, given the proliferation of hostels and illegal building conversions in the neighborhood. He expects even more evictions in the near future.

"Apartments are not built to the same code as transient hotels," said Dennis. "Putting 192 transient residents into a non-fireproof building de-

## MCMAHON...

Continued from page 1

ican, we thought we were getting a change and we still have a Republican," he said.

I'd finish typing this column, but I'm laughing too hard. So instead of beating a Republican 60-33 percent, as he thrashed Bob Stranier in 2008, McMahon will only win by 40,000 votes!

Besides, right now, the leading liberal to challenge McMahon in a Democratic primary is Steve Harrison, the Bay Ridge lawyer who lost to former Rep. Vito Fossella and then lost to McMahon. Harrison has \$11,000 in his war chest, according to federal records. McMahon has \$1 million.

Worse, McMahon's Bay Ridge-Staten Island district is not one that a liberal can win. There's a reason why Barack Obama lost the 13th District in 2008, why John Kerry lost in 2004 — and why Democrats couldn't take it back for three decades: It is not a liberal district.

Better still for McMahon, his health care "no" has emasculated both of his Republican challengers — Mike Grimm and Mike Allegretti — both of whom argued that McMahon didn't do enough to stop the bill.

In the district, McMahon's "no" vote speaks louder than their carrying.

Whatever you feel about McMahon's health care vote — and I personally think it stunk — his "no" proves that when you strip away all the ide-

ology, all the dogma and all the posturing from both parties, there's Mike McMahon, standing in the clearing.

The Republicans can't make a wedge out of this issue. And the liberals shouldn't even bother.

Rep. Mike McMahon will meet with two Democratic clubs over the next two weeks. Democrats for Change at Union Church Parish Hall (8101 Ridge Blvd. between 81st and 82nd streets) in Bay Ridge, (718) 215-2667 on April 1; United Americans Democratic Club at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (7420 Fourth Ave. between 74th and 75th streets) in Bay Ridge, (718) 836-9702 on April 8. Both meetings begin at 7:30 pm.

Hagan is taking a hiatus from Brooklyn College to focus on her job and community work — like most pageant winners do, Walker said, and said she is excited to work her way toward the less-cool title of Miss America.

be a problem for Hagan, who's a "smart, driven, gorgeous" representation for the borough of Kings.

"She is really an amazing woman," said Ted Tamar Walker, a spokeswoman for the pageant.

MISS

Continued from page 1

Miss New York pageant — but Miss Brooklyn pageant promoters say that shouldn't

## OUR OPINION

## Stop park butcher!

Like all Brooklynites who cherish our limited outdoor spaces, we are sickened by what is happening in Prospect Park.

And the lack of response by our police and elected officials is equally infuriating.

For more than three weeks, a series of bizarre and increasingly violent incidents have stalked the lakefront — from the discovery of some blood on the shoreline, to the slaying of turtles to the mysterious dumping of animal entrails and dozens of chicken heads to the arson fires. A duck and an opossum also turned up dead.

The repulsive situation hit a new low this week when one of the park's swans died, possibly as a result of the lake's current status as a toxic soup bowl.

None of these incidents would have come to light without the efforts of a small band of regular park-goers, who have adapted the swans and other waterfowl. Those visitors have informed the press, the Parks Department, the NYPD

## Three weeks of disgusting incidents in Prospect Park simply will not stand.

and their local elected officials — but only the local media seem to care.

If murder, blood, arson and death was stalking Central Park, it would be an international outrage. Mayor Bloomberg would summon his police commissioner to City Hall and demand accountability. Cops would be staked out. Waterfowl would be treated.

In short, there would be action.

But in Prospect Park? Nothing. One problem is that opposition of the park itself is largely paraded out to the Prospect Park Alliance, which is certainly a worthy agency, but one that has a vested interest in making sure that bad news about the park is kept quiet, lest a main source of revenue — donations from wealthy residents around the park — dry up.

And the NYPD has been a non-presence during the latest crisis. During that warm, summer-like weekend in late March, one of the waterfowl activists alerted an officer to a major clue in the case — a bird-feces-filled box — but the officer said he couldn't investigate because he was the only uniformed cop in the entire park.

One cop? Central Park has its own precinct!

It seems clear what needs to happen next:

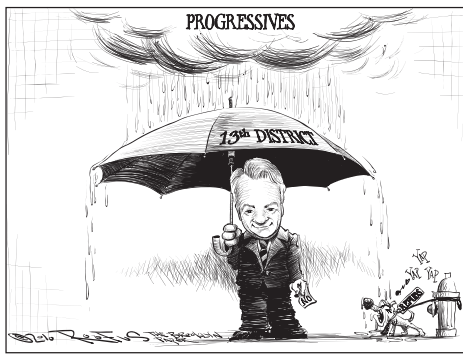
• The NYPD must put a detective on the case and, if need be, stake out the lakefront to catch whomever is dumping dead animals there.

• The Parks Department needs to react faster and more forcefully to alerts about new developments in the case.

• Borough President Markowitz needs to use that mouthpiece of his and shake the Manhattan bureaucracy more vigorously.

This disgusting outrage in our verdant oasis simply should not stand.

## ALL DRAWN OUT



PROGRESSIVES

## LETTERS

## Yards foes remain really angry about project

To the editor,

Your online coverage of the groundbreaking ceremony for the Atlantic Yards project was disappointing — to put it mildly ("Ratner breaks ground" Jay-Z celebrates! Others protest!" March 11). Why would you quote several speakers on "job creation" without noting that there is simply no argument that this project will bring a significant number of jobs, especially in relation to the perhaps as much as \$2 billion in direct and indirect public subsidies?

Certainly, given all these years

to explore the question, you can do more than simply repeat booster claims that have no basis in fact. In a more general sense, you must also be aware that the Independent Budget Office has determined the area itself would be a money-loser for the city.

Let's not get into the "public good" is promoted?

There is a really awful thing happening in the heart of Brooklyn. Please cover it with more seriousness and depth.

Lee Zimmerman, Prospect Heights

To the editor,

We have learned as a result of the entire Atlantic Yards fix-

ation, is that:

1. Governments, and particularly the Bloomberg government, actively work against the interests of its citizens and for the best interests of the billion-

aire elite.

2. Elected officials can be bought and bought cheaply. After all, your paper once reported that Markowitz received in excess of \$40,000 from Ratner. I wonder

how much Council Speaker Quinn received for her endorsement and how much was offered to the other members of the Council. Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, who is supposed to investigate corruption, has been awfully quiet.

3. The citywide media is essentially worthless in uncovering corruption. It often benefits from it in advertising revenue.

4. Billionaires take care of their own kind first; dis honest billionaires help each other more quickly.

5. Voters in each council district can elect one representative, but council members from all of the districts can tell the people of one district what is good for them and what must be done. Local voters are thereby disenfranchised.

One wonders why we vote at all.

Bob Oleskiw, Park Slope

To the editor,

Thank you for your cover photo of Bruce Ratner that appeared in the same issue as a full-page ad by the Barclays Center ("Dig it," March 12). Have clarity cuts not always made it into the actual letter box, and I have to line the

floor with paper for these times. The large ad works well for the cat who is most ill, since it's a full page to him. My other cat prefers target practice, however, and your front page picture of Ratner has successfully been targeted many times in both liquid and solid form, if you really want to catch my drift.

I have long been a fan of The Brooklyn Paper, and although Atlantic Yards coverage has been scant of late, this issue makes up for it. The cats have not had as much fun since we had all those Bloomberg ads showing up in the mail last fall.

Steve de Sève, Brooklyn Heights

To the editor,

The Rev. Herbert Daughtry gave a prayer at Ratner's Barclays Center "groundbreaking" ceremony — and claimed that the project area was "voted-infected" and "garbage-strewn" before Ratner showed up.

Actually, before Ratner came along in 2003, wielding the threat of the state's power of eminent domain to steal private property, the project site was a rapidly de-

veloping, mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood as far as rats or garbage.

But over the past six-and-a-half years, under that threat of eminent domain, Ratner has indeed blighted a neighborhood that wasn't.

One wonders why a man of the cloth would lie through his teeth to mouth a billionaire's de-

veloping, mixed-use residential and commercial neighborhood as far as rats or garbage.

Oh, and one other thing I find money-losing: arena, breaking ground in the middle of a housing crisis, is popular and crucial for Brooklyn and New York, how come out of Brooklyn's Assembly, Senate and Council delegations, totaling 45 elected officials, only six showed up — all of whom with close financial and/or political ties to the developer?

Note that the developer did not enjoy the attendance of Council Speaker Christine Quinn, Public Advocate Bill DeBlasio and Comptroller John Liu.

The answer is obvious.

Daniel Goldstein, Prospect Heights

## Stop 'Butcher'

To the editor,

Regarding your recent story, "Blood on the water" (March 19), I must first say that I've been enjoying the sights of Prospect Park for decades, and am thrilled with all of its changes. But obviously one thing hasn't changed: ritual sacrifice.

I have stumbled across countless scenes of ritual sacrifice throughout the years. Usually a few pieces of fruit and an empty rum bottle is all one finds, but I have also come across at least a dozen signs of poultry slaughter.

There's always a rock, always a pool of blood, always a burn spot, and usually tell-tale clumps of feathers nearby.

Mount Prospect and the Flatbush side of the park seem to be the areas most often used. In fact, on the Flatbush side it's not un-

common to find the entire headless carcass of a rooster.

Even stranger, are the carefully arranged pantographs fashioned from pebbles and twigs within sight of the house.

J. McLaughlin, Park Slope

## Stop 'Butcher'

To the editor,

Would the park notice if the entire lake disappeared overnight?

The penalties for harming wildlife, illegal dumping, and littering in Prospect Park Lake are severe. For example, the Environmental Control Board penalty for violations of regulation A16 (section 56 RCNY) is \$4 (g) (1) states: Molest/Kill/remove/possess animal nest/egg, etc. is \$1,000 for each violation.

The same fine goes for illegal dumping in the park and lake. Garbage, cans, ice ladders, barricades, and other debris are routinely thrown into the waters without fear. Urban Park Rangers and Park Police are needed to patrol the lake and without them visible, the lake becomes an easy target for ongoing vandalism.

It is cost effective to pursue the violator. Without enforcement at the park, many are dreading the consequences of the continuing widespread abuse and neglect.

Anne-Katrin Tizze, Park Slope

## The Brooklyn Paper

KIDS • SCHOOL • STYLE • TEENS • CAMPS • MUSIC

## Teen Spirit learns lesson of the road

Smartmon was happy to learn that Gap Year University has a "Study-abroad" component.

Teen Spirit didn't exactly go to Europe or South America. He went on a road trip to Texas, which is, in a way, a foreign country.

There were no teachers on this trip. No itineraries. No syllabus of appropriate literature. It was, you could say, an independent project. Life

was the teacher, and whatever happened on the way would surely be a life lesson.

On a rainy Saturday morning in March, Teen Spirit set off with three other friends in a Toyota.

"A Toyota," Smartmon thought. "Oh, great."

After days of preparation, Smartmon was stressed. He helped Teen Spirit make a list of what to take.

How much money would he need? What was the weather down in Texas? Did he need a sleeping bag? A raincoat? An umbrella, for Buddha's sake?

About the driving, Smartmon had moments of panic imagining a car accident on the way.

That's why Smartmon thought, "Oh, great."

After days of preparation, Smartmon was stressed. He helped Teen Spirit make a list of what to take.



By Louise Crawford

Thankfully, after much pleading, he let her go. Smartmon still can't believe it. It really was potentially dangerous trip: three 16-year-old girls alone on a bike trip, staying at campground and weird motels. At one place, the woman at the desk asked if they were runaways.

But it was the adventure of a lifetime, which built self-confidence and many memories. Smartmon is grateful to this day that the late great Groovy Grampa said yes.

That's why Smartmon thought, "Oh, great."

After days of preparation, Smartmon was stressed. He helped Teen Spirit make a list of what to take.

Smartmon thought that to the trip she took when she was 16. She and two friends biked from North Carolina to the Appalachian Folk Life Festival in West Virginia. Her father almost didn't let Smartmon go.

"It's dangerous in the South," he told Smartmon. "You've seen 'Deliverance'."

was open to Teen Spirit's request to go down to Austin in a car. She knew it would be a great adventure and something he'd remember for the rest of his life.

During the first week of Teen Spirit's trip, Hepecat got a text message from his boy. He called Smartmon excitedly.

"He wrote: 'Been to Sun Records. On my way to Graceland. Life is good.'"

Hepecat told Smartmon. "He didn't text me," she told him.

Still, she was delighted with his message. Life really is good when you're 18 and on the road. A few days later, Smartmon called Teen Spirit's cellphone.

"We're in Austin," he told her. "And we're not going to that music festival in Monterey, Mexico. There's a drug war and it doesn't sound like a good idea."

Smartmon was relieved beyond words. The group planned to go to MyMix, a music festival on the heels of SXSW, organized by Todd P, an all-star event organizer in Brooklyn. They were going to take a six-hour bus ride from Austin to Monterey.

But in Austin, they'd heard reports about drug cartels and the violence.

Smartmon felt relief. She was awed by the fact that Teen Spirit and his group had made the decision to avoid what was a potentially dangerous situation.

A few days later when Teen Spirit got back from his trip, Smartmon was away at a writers' conference in Delaware.

"The Prigdal Son returned at three in the morning," Hepecat told Smartmon the next morning.

Smartmon was happy. Her son was back from his trip of a lifetime, yet another feature of his year at Gap Year University. The bad news was that he rewarded their trust with good decision-making and a really good experience.

Now the big question: How many credits did he get?

## FAMILY CALENDAR

FRI, APRIL 2

11:30 am: Storytime with Emily. See Friday, April 2.

1-3 pm: Blooming Naturalists Club. Learn the tools and make your own nature journals. Free. Prospect Park Audubon Center. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park. (718) 267-3400, www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

1-3 pm: Gardening workshop. Participants make their own pot of herbs to take home using soil, peat, soil and seeds. Free. Lefferts Historic House. 195 Prospect Park West at Fifth Street. (718) 789-2822, www.prospectpark.org.

1:30 pm: Learn about pollution. Come find out what the buzz is all about. Free with \$7.50 museum admission. Brooklyn Children's Museum. 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant. (718) 723-4400, www.brooklynkids.org.

11 am: Dance around with Nat. Moxie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 923-9710, thefoxmoxie.com.

2:30 pm: Snake feeding. See what's on the menu for Fantasia. Brooklyn Public Library. 145 Brooklyn Ave. at St. Marks Avenue in Bedford-Stuyvesant. (718) 723-4400, www.brooklynkids.org.

4 pm: Arts and crafts. Free. Pacific Library. 125 Fourth Ave. at Pacific Street in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 723-4400, www.brooklynkids.org.

6:15 pm: Movie night. Moxie Spot (81 Atlantic Ave. between Hicks and Henry streets in Brooklyn Heights. (718) 923-9710, thefoxmoxie.com.

10 am: Brooklyn Heights Promenade Easter egg hunt. Free. Pierpont Playgroup/Pierpont Street and Columbia Heights in Brooklyn Heights. www.brooklynheights.org.

10:30 am: Story time for kids. Greenlight Bookstore. 1686 Fulton St. between South Elbert Place and South Portland Avenue in Fort Greene. (718) 246-0200, abookstoreinbrooklyn.blogspot.com.

1-4 pm: Unscrambling the Egg. Learn interesting facts about the incredible edible egg. Free. Prospect Park Audubon Center. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park. (718) 267-3400, www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

1:30 pm: Science power hour. Learn about nature. Prospect Park Audubon Center. Enter park at Lincoln Road and Ocean Avenue in Prospect Park. (718) 267-3400, www.prospectpark.org/audubon.

1:30 pm: Science power hour. Learn how laundry was done in the 19th century. Lefferts Historic House. Enter park at Flatbush Avenue near Englewood Boulevard. (718) 789-2822, www.prospectpark.org.

1 pm: "It's On (The Sky Is Getting Darker)." Puppet show performed by Children's Theatre Works. Free. Brooklyn Public Library's Central Branch. Flatbush Avenue at Eastern Parkway in Grand Army Plaza in Park Slope. (718) 230-2100.

MON, APRIL 5

1:30-2:30 pm: Learn about animal self-defense. Free. To list your event, email calendar@bcpaper.com.

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# MUSIC TO THEIR FEARS

## Panel approves reuse of Degraw St. firehouse

By Gary Bulso  
For The Brooklyn Paper

It was a bittersweet symphony last week, as a decommissioned firehouse moved ahead toward a new life as the home of an arts group, even as some neighbors of the Degraw Street company still object that it was shuttered by the Fire Department in the first place.

By an 11-2 margin, Community Board 6's Land Use/Landmarks Committee approved a lease last week for the Brooklyn Philharmonic, which will occupy the former home of Empire Company 204 between Court and Smith streets.

The group will rent the space from the city for \$1 a year for 10 years — but the community board panel support was conditioned on the group setting aside \$5,000 a month for building maintenance.

The city has allocated \$1.6 million to refurbish the building for the Philharmonic.

That allocation was immediately seized upon by opponents of the deal.

"Why isn't the city giving \$1.8



A rendering of the remodeled firehouse on Degraw Street.

million to [keep open] the firehouse," said committee member Lou Sones, who added that supporting the Philharmonic's "BPM Music

Center" plan was antithetical to a previous position taken by the board, which argued that the space should be restored as a firehouse.

Sones argued that the city has skewed priorities — handing out tickets and citations to everyday residents and businesses, while allowing an arts group to occupy prime real estate for \$1 a year.

Committee member Jerry Armer made the safety argument. "As much as I like the Philharmonic, I don't like the idea of [it] occupying firehouses," he said.

"The money could be spent better somewhere else — maybe saving another fire company."

But member Ely Spicer approved of the new use, as well as the way the building's facade would remain intact. "This is a great idea and a proper use of the building without major change."

"It is absolutely critical that the city support cultural institutions," said EDC spokesman Josh Nachbortz. "Even with the fiscal crisis, we still support groups like the Brook-

lyn Philharmonic."

For its part, the Philharmonic has raised \$200,000, according to Greg Peterson, the group's executive director.

"We plan a community space to provide arts education classes and space for meetings and public events," Peterson said. "Obviously, we can't replace a fire station."

The space will also be used for performances by a string quartet, but the space is not large enough for an orchestra, he said.

Some committee members complained that the Philharmonic is so cash-strapped that it had to cancel performances last year. But city officials said they were not worried.

"We believe we will be successful," said Donald Elliott, the vice chair of the Philharmonic's board of directors. "But unfortunately, there are no guarantees."

The full Community Board 6 will discuss the matter at its next meeting at PS 32 (317 Hoyt St.) between Union and President streets in Boerum Hill, (718) 643-3027 on April 14.

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State Sen. Eric Adams has started a campaign to get kids to pull up their pants!

## Pol says bottoms up!

### Lawmaker wants to raise pants, standards

By Thomas Tracy  
for The Brooklyn Paper

When it comes to wearing your pants, no one should tell you how you can go.

So said high school students on Wednesday as they bashed state Sen. Eric Adams' "Stop the Sag" campaign — the Fort Greene Democrat's attempt to get local kids to hitch up their drawers.

"I think what we wear is our opinion," said 16-year-old Jemel Wilson, a student at Grove Westinghouse HS, as he adjusted his low-hanging jeans outside the Fulton Mall. "People shouldn't tell us what to wear."

Fellow student Kiara Dowdley, 16, added that, given his position in power, Adams should actually be supporting the youths' free speech.

"People have the right to wear whatever they want," she said.

But Adams sees something more dire in the annoying fashion trend: Wearing

your pants so low could one day "morale bankrupt society," he said.

That's why he thought up the billboards, which started appearing in Fort Greene, Crown Heights and East Flatbush this week. These "public service announcements" depict two youths with their pants hanging off their thighs, showing off the boxes. On the side will read phrases like "Stop the sag," "You're better than this" and "Raise your pants, raise your image."

Adams said he put up \$2,000 from his campaign coffers to pay for the billboards with the non-profit group Fully Persuaded for Children and Families. He hopes these messages will put a dent in this underwear-free "epidemic" that was inspired by clothing trends in state prisons, picked up by hip-hop artists in the 1990s, and each year seem to drop lower and lower.

"You can't lead if you can't walk straight — and you can't walk straight with your pants down around your feet," said Adams. "If our youth can't navigate a belt loop, then they won't be able to navigate the complexities of American Express and corporate America."

In addition to the billboard campaign, Adams has sent a letter to Schools Chancellor Joel Klein asking him to introduce a dress code "that prohibits saggy pants attire."

Some kids learned the lesson without help from Albany.

Jose Lopez said he used to wear his pants low as a youth, but the 33-year-old said he grew out of it. As a result, he thought Adams shouldn't get his pants in a bunch.

"It doesn't mean anything. It's just a style," Lopez said, adding that he resented the placement of the billboards in minority neighborhoods. "They should put them up everywhere. In Bensonhurst, the kids are doing the same thing."

—with Stephen Witt

# Hitting the road for affordable housing

By Michèle De Meglio  
for The Brooklyn Paper

Three gutsy gals will spend two months riding their Giant Defy bikes from Providence, Rhode Island, to San Francisco to bring attention to what they say is the need for additional affordable housing in Brooklyn's low-income neighborhoods.

Wait, what? Biking may seem like an odd way to plead for cheap apartments but Park Slope resident Kristie Gerhart, who will make the trek with 30 cyclists, including fellow Sloper Kelly Kraft and Dittmas Park resident Angela Parotta, says it makes perfect sense.

While many activists take their protests directly to politicians and government agencies, Gerhart believes the unconventional biking trip may bring more media attention to Brooklyn's affordable housing crisis.

"It's not like we're in a cardboard box outside of City Hall," she said. "It's more highbrow than just telling people that we need housing."

The trip, from June 11 to Aug. 21, is arranged by Bike & Build, a nonprofit organization raising funds to support the construction of affordable housing. The organization has offered



WILL BIKE FOR HOUSING: (From left) Kristie Gerhart, Kelly Kraft and Angela Parotta will bike cross-country this summer to raise money for affordable housing.

grants to housing groups run by young adults and donated money to Habitat for Humanity, which builds homes for families in need.

Gerhart, a graphic designer, can afford market rents — she and her boyfriend pay \$1,500 for a one-bedroom apartment — but she's interested in helping the less fortunate.

Gearing up for her second Bike & Build ride, she must raise \$4,000 for the cause. Last year, her entire team of 32 people collected \$150,000.

Fulfilling the "bik" portion of the journey, cyclists will make pit stops in states like Kansas and Colorado to help Habitat for Humanity build homes.

"They'll be rewarded for their hard work — with a roof over their heads. In each town, church groups and community centers will provide meals and lodging."

"It's amazing. Everybody is really great and pretty generous," Gerhart said.

Can these Brooklynites really be so happy about riding 4,115 miles from June

to August? Are there any drawbacks?

"I am most nervous about spending two months in Spandex and that I'll walk funny after 70 plus miles on a bike every day," Kraft worried.

Parotta said the pain is a fair trade-off for being able to help Bike & Build create homes for needy families.

A summer without biking and building is no summer at all," she said.

Donate to Bike & Build at [www.bikeandbuild.org](http://www.bikeandbuild.org).

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